

**Reintroduction of Black-Footed Ferrets Where a Landowner Consents
Pursuant to a Programmatic Safe Harbor Agreement**

Agriculture landowners realize firsthand that the current applications of the Endangered Species Act are not meeting the needs of species or capitalizing on the abilities for conservation through agriculture landowners. Agriculture landowners have a real desire for significant increases in performance-based conservation through assurances, incentives and flexible implementation.

Senate Bill 169 is Colorado's enabling language for the newly-created Fish and Wildlife Service's Black-Footed Ferret (BFF) Recovery Program designed by agencies in partnership with agriculture landowners. This program offers regulatory assurances through a programmatic safe harbor agreement and incentives by way of prairie dog (ferret food source) perimeter control and financial incentives. The members of the Colorado Cattlemen's Association (CCA) see this program as paving the way toward species conservation, previous to ESA listing, in a way that does not punish landowners or the species in question; but rather prioritizes voluntary performance-based species conservation through the efforts of agriculture landowners.

Senate Bill 169

- Reintroduction of BFF is strictly voluntary
- Reintroduction is limited to private lands
- Specifically references the BFF Programmatic Safe Harbor that:
 - o Landowners receive assurances that additional land use limitations will NOT be required
 - o Incidental take of BFF is allowed consistent with the Programmatic Safe Harbor
 - o Landowners may return to agreed-upon baseline of BFF's at any time.

BFF Recovery Program Incentives

- Allow grazing over BFF Program-enrolled acres
- Financial compensation for enrolled acres
- Prairie dog perimeter control to stop expansion of prairie dogs beyond enrolled acres
- Plague vaccination of prairie dogs to secure enrolled acres

Resources

www.blackfootedferret.org

See Draft Safe Harbor Agreement link

Programmatic Safe Harbor Agreement

- Program participation is voluntary
- Adjoining landowners are protected through assurances in the BFF Programmatic Safe Harbor Agreement for incidental take and removal of BFF's. Protected against any additional land use limitations
- Incidental take of BFF are allowed
- Assurances that additional land use limitations will NOT be required
- Landowners may return to agreed-upon baseline of BFF's at any time. In Colorado, BFF baseline on private lands is zero.

Supporters

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